from the list of essential commodities in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

Increase in bilateral trade with China

*390. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a 79 per cent growth in bilateral trade with China in 2004;

(b) if so, whether India has put forward any proposal or *vice-versa* for having a free trade agreement between the two countries; and

(c) how the bilateral talks between India and China help in improving trade between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) As per DGCIS provisional data, the India-China trade registered a growth of 47% during 2003-04 as against 2002-03.

(b) As per the Joint Statement released during the visit of Chinese Premier to India, it was agreed to appoint a Joint Task Force to study in detail the feasibility of, and the benefits that may derive from, an India-China Regional Trading Arrangement and give recommendations regarding its content.

(c) Bilateral talks is one of the measures for improving trade, as it helps in discussing and resolving the problems faced by the exporters and importers of both countries.

Adverse effect of alert regarding Tsunami

†*391. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after devastating Tsunami waves, survivors in coastal areas showed patience while Central Government's Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Science and Technology flashed alert message again which led to panic among coastal habitants;

(b) if so, what were the reasons therefor; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the details of efforts made to avert recurrence of such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (c) The Tsunami alert message was issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, as a measure of abundant caution, in the forenoon of 30th December, 2004 on receipt of a message from the India Meteorological Department (IMD) suggesting the possibility of occurrence of another Tsunami in the Indian Ocean in the afternoon of 30th December, 2004. A de-warning message was issued after IMD subsequently reported that no earthquake of large (>7.5) magnitude had occurred in the following 12 hours and that they were constantly monitoring the seismic activity. The Tsunami alert did create Some panic in the back drop of the devastating Tsunami experience of 26th December, 2004.

The Government of India have decided to set up an Early Warning System for Tsunamis and Storm surges in the Indian Ocean. The System is expected to be functional in next two and half years and will help in providing more reliable advance warning of Tsunamis and Storm surges.

G-20 Meeting

*392. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN:
SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the agenda for the meeting of G-20 countries held recently in New Delhi;

(b) the outcome of the meeting; and

(c) the issues put forth by India in the meeting and the response of the other countries thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The objectives of the G-20 meeting held in New Delhi from 17-19 March, 2005 were, *inter alia*, to assess the status of the on-going negotiations on the Agreement on Agriculture of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and to develop the common position and approach of the G-20 alliance on the various issues of interest and concern. The meeting also intended to consolidate the G-20 Alliance and to establish an important